

TAX TIME: 1906

The old township tax records reveal the gradual settlement of Canosia Township. In 1906 local residents owned a little over half the land while the rest was owned by railroad, timber, electric power companies and various investment firms. The St. Paul-Duluth Railroad held title to over 6,000 acres; Boston & Duluth Farm Company owned about 350 acres and Great Northern Power had almost 1500.

In 1906 much of the land in the township was taxed at a minimum rate of \$5.36 for 40 acres. Logging railroads still extended through part of the township and certain timbered parcels were valued much higher than developed farm land. The tax on one forty-acre parcel in Section 17 was \$18.76, while two forties in Section 18, near the railroad spurs, were taxed at \$16.75.

Many of the first settlers and their families still owned original homestead lands and, in the area north of Wild Rice Lake, the Michaels, McComber, Ostrowski and Burkhart parcels were taxed, on average, \$5.81 to \$9.44 for forty acres. In the south central area of the township, where farming was more widespread, other pioneers such as the McCrimmon, Samuelson, Paulson, Pederson, Abrahamson and Kolodjeski families paid similar taxes. Some prosperous homesteaders had already expanded their holdings with additional acreage, both for farming and logging.

Lakefront taxes varied widely. A 40-acre tract near Wild Rice Lake was \$12 while a narrow half-acre parcel on Pike Lake was 84 cents. All of Section 18, near Caribou Lake, had only ten owners and the tax on a two acre lakeshore lot was 34 cents. The 11 acre Brindos parcel on Pike Lake was taxed at \$7.70 while Mary Kendall, owner of the Park Hotel at Pike Lake, had a tax bill of \$16.75 for her combined 13 acres near the school. Some Pike Lake frontage, on the south and east, had already been broken into 1/2 acre and 3/4 acre plots. One small parcel of .17 acre, taxed at 34 cents, required a full page of legal description in the tax ledger. The pioneer names are here also: Daniels, Clark, Merritt, Anderson, Reannes and several others who owned land on Pike Lake.

Section 36, now Duluth International Airport land, was different: the sole owner of this 640 acre parcel was taxed \$118.34.

At the corner of Midway and Martin Roads, the Canosia Town Hall, with its .9 acres of donated land, would remain unchanged until the present. The rest of Section 32, with 11 owners, was still comparatively undeveloped.

Tax revenue was shared by two school districts: No. 55 in the east and No.10 in the west half. Besides the Pike Lake School, there was a small school on five acres at the corner of LaVaque and Martin Roads.

The total 1906 tax levy of \$3,603.58 is recorded in a large leather-bound ledger, which is still in the township archives. The town assessor, writing with a quill pen in 1906, not only had superb penmanship but a lot of patience. There were ink blots on several pages, but he had carefully bleached out most of the stains. The reader is left with the impression that somehow this diligent assessor will eventually find the last three property owners, listed on the tax rolls as "unknown", and bill them the usual \$5.36 tax for their forty acre parcels.

(Canosia Historical Society)